CHAPTER X

SOCIO RELIGIOUS STUDY

The authors of the religious stone-epic to be sculptured on the stūpa or temples were so much in love with, and under the influence of, the religions of the common man, rather than of Buddhism or Saivism, that an open admission of a large number of their common deities remains preserved.

One instance is the figure of Śrīma Devatā at Bharhut, ancient most Mother Goddess referred to in the Vedas and conceived of as the consort of Nārāyaṇa. The Śrīma cult was accepted by the Buddhists, Jains and the Hindus and was universal in each household. She is not only depicted at Bharhut, but also at Sāñchī, Bodh Gaya and in the Jain caves at Udaigiri.

From the very prehistoric period, we find the paintings which throw light on the social or religious life. For example, we can take the rock paintings of Mirzapur area. There is a painting which represents the social or home life of the people of the prehistoric India. A man having laid aside his bow, arrows and an axe, plays to three women and a child upon a harp. The women sit around pounding roots and grinding grains. Two women and a child sit in a hut from the roof of which
hanging a bag, a quiver of arrows and a bow, while in the background are four jars and in front two low benches. The men and women dance in groups and in pairs. The men play drums and a double pipe and are entertained by the performance of monkeys and a dancing bear. This painting shows that the main occupation of the pre-historic people was hunting and that they used to entertain themselves by performing dances and music.

The Jatakas are stories on the previous life of the Buddha. These were extremely popular and included a number of folk tales. The Jatakas are represented at Bharut, Sāti, Mathura, Gandhāra and Amaravati.

At Bharut, we find the depiction of the *Visavāntara Jataka*. It is depicted on a pillar which is cut into two parts. The first scene on the upper panel of one part shows a royal personage riding on an elephant. Two children stand on the ground. In the middle panel are portrayed four horses with names and a man of royal figure is seated on the chariot. The third scene in the upper panel of the other part indicates a royal personage pouring water into the hands of a brahmana. Behind him are the members of his family. The other three brahmans holding long staffs in their hands are seen in the lower portion. The second scene shows the four horses yoked to a chariot. The three brahmaṇas stand near the feet
of the horse with folded hands. This pillar is now in the Allahabad Museum. Another relief depicts a royal personage donating an elephant in a park, with a rite of the pūrṇa Kambha, to an ascetic holding a long staff in his left hand. Perhaps, it is the depiction of the donation of the royal elephant which was done by Viśvaṁtara. This Jataka shows that charity was very common in the social life and Viśvaṁtara was one of the example who donated every thing to the brāhmaṇa.

Another Jataka story is represented in one of the bas-reliefs of the Bharhut stūpa which was recognized by Cunningham as Yava-majñakīya Jataka. We do not find the title of this Jataka in the Ceylonese list, but the story is written in ārhat kathā-maṇḍ.ri of Ksemendra and in the Kāṭāyaṇītsāgara of Somadeva.

On comparing the sculpture with the story, the principal figures can be recognized at once. In the midst is king Nanda seated on the throne. To the right is his young wife Upakosā, pointing to the open and in the foreground are the four baskets containing her four lovers. Three of the baskets have been opened thus exposing the lovers' faces, while the fourth has just arrived on the shoulders of two porters.

According to the Arhatkāra, Vararucā, after completing his education, got married to the daughter
of Guru Upavarga called Upakosa. After some time, Vararuci went outside and left alone his beautiful wife. Once, the young faujdar of the king, the domestic priest and the minister saw that beauty. Gazing at her, all the three fell in love with her. Apart from each other, the first amongst them, the son of the minister, said to her 'Love me'. She, who had finished bathing, seeing that night had come, became afraid and spoke to him. "Be it so, on the third day at night-fall I will meet you secretly". Speaking thus to him, she went. Then she addressed the domestic priest "On the third day hence, in the second watch of the night I shall be at your disposal". Turning away from him, she said to the faujdar, "On the third day hence in the third watch of the night I am ready to do your will". After that she went home.

Being in want of her husband's money, she tried to remedy its concealment (by the banker). But Hiragyagupta asked her for an assignation in her house. She said to him, "On the third day at the end of the night, I will obey your orders". She told that story to her domestics. When the third day had come, the excellent minister's son trembling and having lost all control over himself entered her house at night, where the lamps had been extinguished. Upakosa called him by his name and said "On you I have placed my affection". At her order he entered a dark room
in the interior of the house. There the maid servant smeared for a long time the limbs of the lover with the soft unguent consisting of oil lamp soot. But when in the second watch of the night the domestic priest came, in haste, she showed to the first lover an open wooden box and said "Enter, quickly here comes the master of the house" and closed it with an iron bolt. She said to the domestic priest "You must not touch me without having bathed". He was also treated in the same manner. When he had been annotated with oil and soots the third one came and the priest was despatched to the same box. The third one also met the same fate. At the end of the night, Hiranya Gupta arrived and the fauzdar was also concealed in the same wooden box. Facing the box, Upakosā spoke to Vaniya, "Give me the deposit". Hiranya Gupta replied "Love me, o sweet smiling one, I have the money, fair browed one which your husband deposited with me". Hearing this, she exclaimed in a loud voice, "Here Ye deities of the house, be witnesses, he has my property". Speaking thus she defaced him also with lamp soot. Then she said, "The night has passed go quickly. Vaniya went forth covering his face from fear. Thus Upakosā protected her virtue and started early for the audience-hall of king Nanda. There, she said, "O king, the Vaniya Hiranya Gupta conceals great wealth which my husband deposited with him".
when the Vahya was summoned, Upakos̄a said "Lord, at home I have witnesses. Order my household gods to be brought, who are kept in a box and they will declare the truth. The box was brought at the king's command and placed by the bearer in the midst of assembly. Then she said, "Tell the truth for my sake. If you remain silent, I shall quickly burn the basket." Hearing this, they told the truth. All present in the assembly who heard this miraculous answer were astonished. They opened the basket and saw the naked men smeared with soot. When the king was informed of the circumstances of the case, he punished them and honoured Upakos̄a as his spiritual sister.

**Ganadañtava Jataka** — This bas relief was broken into two pieces. The upper half was first found at Bharhut, but the lower half was discovered by Babu Jamana Shankar at Patnora at a distance of seven miles. Here, elephant Chandañtava is presented in the natural size and is shown as kneeling down to enable the hunter to cut off his tusk with greater ease.

Chandañtava was a white elephant. One day the king elephant snook a tree under which his two queens were standing. The flower dust fell on the elder queen, Mashasupadr̥̄̃ while only dry sticks leaves and ants fell on the younger queen, Chulīa Subnadr̥̄̃. She started hating the king. She made gifts to the Buddha and wished that
after her death she might be born as the daughter of the king of Madu and, when grown up, she might become the wife of the king of Benaras. She should then please her husband so much as to prevail on him to send a hunter to shoot the king elephant with a poisoned arrow and to cut off this tusk, which emitted rays of six different colours.

All this happened according to her wish. The hunter reached Benaras. Then laying the tusks before the queen he said, "Respected Queen, according to your orders I have killed him and here are the tusks". But the queen then began to reflect that in causing the death of such a noble animal, she had committed a very cruel deed and remembering all the virtues of the elephant king, such a deep sorrow came upon her that she died on the same day of a broken heart.

Yamou mane evayesi Jataka — The Bharhut sculpture represents the principal scenes of the legend where the blind folded husband plays the harp while his wife and her lover dance before him. The building in the bas-relief represents an Indian private house of the better sort shortly after the time of Asoka.

There was a king in Benaras named Dhammadatta. By his queen, he had a son who was comely in person and well versed in every branch of science. But he was an
inveterate gambler and when playing with his minister, he would recite the following verse:

"Sabhā nadi wankayata
Sabbe katt namayo wane
Saboitthe Karopapa
Labsanā nte wateke."

The minister, finding his wealth nearly exhausted, began to think that his want of success must be due to the truth of the verse. He procured a newly born female child and had her brought up in a secluded house where she never saw a man. As she grew up the minister married her and when he next went to gamble, no sooner did the king repeat his customary stanza, then the minister added "my wife accepted". As the king continued to lose from that day he got angry and determined to corrupt the minister's wife. Then he appointed a young handsome man to open a shop near the minister's house. Through the help of a maid servant, the man managed to meet the minister's wife and they became friends. He made a plan. Accordingly, when the minister returned, she asked him to play the narp blindfolded so that she might dance in his presence unabashed and, further, that she might be allowed to give him a knock on the head. No sooner was he blindfolded, then the narp-keeper appeared on the scene and gave him such a tremendous blow on the
head that his deep sunken eye balls were almost thrown out of their sockets and before he recovered from the blow, the lover had gone back.

From that day, his wife had proved untrue. The minister's good luck, had forsaken him and when the king told him the faithless conduct of his wife, he ordered her to go through an ordeal. When the day for the ordeal came and she was ready to cast herself into the fire, the shopkeeper arrived and seizing her by the hand asked what the matter was. Then the young woman was turned out of the minister's house.

At Bharhut, we find the depiction of the 'dream of queen Māyā' at the moment of her conception of the saviour. It is a medallion on the interior of the eastern railing bearing the inscription 'bhagavatorūkdanta'. Here queen Maya is seen from above but the elephant is depicted on the side. Servants, fanning the dreamer and watching her sleep are also depicted on the same side. The elements of the scene have been assembled but they have not been co-ordinated in a consistent perspective from a definite point of view. They are shown simply in such a way as to be readily recognized and interpreted. Furthermore, the carving is very flat; the eyes, hair, ornaments and garments have been rendered by a mere linear
cutting in a simple scratch-work style. The idyllic intimacy of the bedroom and the calm delight of the auspicious dream have been exposed in a most direct and even charming way.

Among the reliefs of the stūpa at Bharhut are portraits of the donors who contributed to the lavish decoration of this early Buddhist shrine. In the central panel 36, a married couple stands in an attitude of enraptured devotion, paying homage to the monument and to the relic contained within its dome. The husband, professing his faith, makes a gesture with the left hand, raising it to his breast while his wife lifts a flower in her hand intending to throw it at the stūpa worshiping a holy sanctuary or image by tossing flower, was a gesture characteristic of pre-Aryan rites. It is still a prominent feature in the form of worship known as pūjā. The offering of pūjā which came back into style in the Buddhist and medieval period and constitutes the basic form of modern Hindu worship, consists of flowers, rice, water, oil and milk scattered or poured on the sacred object. The Bharhut relief, though carved in stone, is executed in the technique of a wood carving with a simple vigorous design. And, though, realistic in appearance, it insists on the traditional ideal in the contours of the women; she has a fully rounded heavy
breasts, broad hips and a particularly narrow waist.

At Bharhut we have found sculptures of Apsarasas who are engaged in dance and music. They are four in number. The scene itself is labelled as Sudika Sammandam Turai Devanam. Where sudika is the same as Sattaka (a spring festival) sammadha, performance of joy, turam as turya, play of instrumented music in the assembly of gods devanam. It means that people used to dance in the social function of the spring.

we find some figures which are not inscribed. The first scene on the left shows a tall tree between two women. The woman to the left apparently a servant, is cutting some standing corn, while the other to the right, her mistress, is seated on the ground beside a large vessel which is raised upon a common earthen fire place. In the next scene to the right, the woman - mistress - is seated on the ground beside a man and both are engaged in eating chapatis which are being presented to them by a female servant.

In the third scene there are four persons, a man and woman, a boy and a girl. In the middle stands a tree with large garlands hanging on all sides of it. The boy and the girl are lying on mattresses spread on the ground. The man and the woman are standing and bending forward, the former towards the girl and the
latter towards the boy. Their actions are not clear but, probably, they are forcing the children to take poison with long spoons.

The fourth scene on the right hand shows two gigantic birds carrying off two dead human beings, male and female, by the hair of their heads, they are naked and their arms are hanging idly by their sides. The whole panel probably depicting one story and these dead bodies are of those man and woman who are shown in the second scene and this is their punishment for having tortured the children. It seems that at that time rule and regulations were very strong and people were ordered to kill for such a cruel social offence.

At Bārharut, we also find the depiction of Rāmāyana. Here, a man and a woman are standing beside a house engaged in earnest conversation. Behind the house, another man is seated. There is nothing to indicate the nature of the story. But according to Cunningham, the seated figure is Rāma and the other two are Sītā and Laksmana.

Here also, we find three figures. A woman and a man are standing together in a courtyard, surrounded on three sides by houses. The woman is holding a basket which was emptied by the man, the second man is standing outside the house, to the right, with his benghi. The
sculpture agrees with Vālmiki's description of Rāma's dwelling place at Pañchavatī on the Godāvari.

Again, two men Rāma and Lākṣmāṇa are holding an earnest conversation one standing and the other seated to which a woman (Sītā) is listening from a circular hole. Both men are speaking together and emphasizing their arguments with their upraised fore-fingers.

Here, a sage is seated on a mukhā with his right leg raised in the Indian fashion and his left foot is resting on a foot stool. In the middle, stands a woman who is arguing with the sage as both have their right fore-fingers raised as if addressing each other. To the right, a female is leaving the scene.

Once more, the same two men and a woman are standing before a seated ascetic. The men are standing in respectful attitude with their hands crossed on their breasts while the woman is eagerly listening to the sage who is addressing them with his fore-finger raised. It may be the picture of the arrival of Rāma, Sītā and Lākṣmāṇa at the hermitage of the sage Bhardwāja or at that of Vālmiki near Chitrakūṭa.

If the identification of Cunningham is correct, we can say that the story of Rāma was a popular one even
in the early Buddhist times.

At Sānchi also, we find the depiction of Jataka story. The various scenes are represented very vividly and dramatically. It begins from the right hand of the front side. First we see the inner side of a palace. A royal elephant is shown below the balcony through which prince Viśvaṅtara is pouring water from a water pitcher to a man below. It indicates his donation of the royal elephant to a Brāhmaṇ. Next comes the departure of the royal family from the palace. At the gate, from which a few women are coming out with water-pot, the prince, his wife and children are being seen off by the people. The family is going on a carriage yoked with four horses. On the way, the prince donated his carriage and horses to the Brāhmaṇ. Now they are walking on foot? The prince holds the boy and his wife holds the girl on her waist. Villagers show their respect towards them with folded hands. Above, the heads of the royal family, are represented the scenes of rural life. On the right side, two women are seated with children in front of their cottage; in the middle, two peasants holding spear and bow, are going to hunt and in the left two others are returning from their hunting. The next one is seen on the back side of the same lintel. The legend proceeds from the east end. They are pursuing now, the
way to exile towards a forest on foot. The prince and his wife are holding their children in the same manner as shown in the previous scene. At last, they arrive in the midst of a jungle. They are apparently taking rest. The children are seated under a mango tree and the couple on a rock. Around them are designed a number of trees, a small stream with lotus flowers, antelopes and a bird to show that they are now in the midst of the jungle.

Then we come to the scenes in the central architraves. Here the story runs from the right hand to the left. In front of a hermitage, the couple who now have changed their dress, are doing something before the fire. Besides the hut, their children are playing in the grove composed of mango-trees, plaintains and a number of beasts. In front of another hermitage, the couple sit in chatting. Viṣvaṁtara is seated in a manner of being bound his knee with the yoga patta.

Next, we notice the sight of the prince giving his children to a Brāhmaṇ. Then we see the Brahman taking away the two pitiful children to the left hand, beating them with a stick. Then the wife of Viṣvaṁtara is seen coming back from fruit picking with a basket on her head. Three animals are facing her which may correspond to those who are mentioned in the next as the messengers sent by Devatā of Himalaya mountain in order to obstruct
her way back. To the left, we find that a hunter is drawing a bow towards the Brāhmaṇ to stop him from going to Viṣṇuṭara and ask for his children. This scene should have come earlier, according to the legend. Then comes the scene of the offering of his wife by Viṣṇuṭara to Indra who is disguised as a Brāhmaṇ. Indra, who now reveals his real feature with a Veṇa, a jar of ambrosia and a tīrā, is in the act of returning his wife to Viṣṇuṭara. The couple is embracing each other out of happiness. Now the king Sanjaya, father of Viṣṇuṭara, comes with his relatives to persuade his son to return to his native land. The king is riding on a horse back with umbrella. Viṣṇuṭara is proceeding to his palace, in the left hand, riding on an elephant with his wife and children. His father and subjects are also marching together.

The last scene of the story is depicted in the west end of the same architrave. Viṣṇuṭara's father is seated with his family on the balcony and a captain-in-chief is facing Viṣṇuṭara, who is now the king. Then we see the reinstallation of the exiled family. It may be noted that the city moats are transformed into lotus pools haunted by Hamsas, where women come to fill their waterjars and their banks are turned into parks of Mangotrees and banana trees.
In the eastern gateway on the third architrave, we see the visit of Asoka to the Bodhi-tree. In the centre are the temple and the trees of Bodha Gaya and to the left, a crowd of musicians and devotees with the water vessels while to the right are a royal retinue and a king and a queen descending from an elephant and afterwards doing worship at the tree. This is the ceremonial visit which Asoka and his queen Tissarakkhitā paid to Bodhi tree for the purpose of watering it and restoring its pristine beauty after the evil spell which the queen in a fit of jealousy had cast upon it. At end, there is a pair of peacocks.

**Eastern Gateway Right Pillar - Front Face:** This panel shows that dance and music were common practices in a royal family and the dancing girls were enjoying respect in the society. Here, the Rājā is seated on a throne in the palace hall holding the Vajra or thunderbolt in his right hand and in his left, a gaurd. Two attendants behind him are holding Chattrā and Chaurī. On his right is seated the heir apparent attended by two chaurī and chattrā bearers. On the left of the king are two girls who are dancing on the sound of drum and lutes.

**Right Pillar Inner Face -** Maya, the mother of Buddha, is represented asleep and the chadanta elephant
in touching her feet with his trunk. Below her, the prince Siddhārtha is passing through the city gate of Kapila in a chariot drawn by horses. He is preceded by musicians and attended by elephant riders and horsemen. In the front are three figures with joined hands adoring a holy Bodhi tree enclosed in a square Buddhist railing.

On the left pillar of the eastern gate also, there is the representation of Māyā's dream.

Eastern Gate left pillar Inner Face:— The scene is one of the most interesting of all the Sāñchī bas-reliefs. Here women are employed in all the domestic occupations. We find a beautiful social scene. To the right is the city gate and a man is carrying a small load, suspended by ropes from both ends of a pole. Beyond him are two women, naked to the waist, one stooping to fill her water jar from a tank and the other with a water jar under her left arm. On their right is a male figure. He is also naked upto the waist and standing with hands joined in adoration before an altar. On the left of the compartment, there is a very lively kitchen scene. A woman is husking corn in a large wooden mortar with a two handed pestle. A second woman is seated winnowing the corn from the chaff in a flat spade shaped basket. A third woman is standing at a four legged table rolling out chopattis and a fourth woman is seated grinding spices.
on the sil or flat stone with a baht or round muller. Behind her, seated on the ground, is the raja, or master of the house-hold and the background are two houses with dome-shaped roof. The lower portion of the compartment is filled with goats, sheep and oxen.

**Western Gateway - Right Pillar Inner Face:** Here inside the gateway is a tree before which a male and a female figures are paying adoration with up-lifted hands.

**Western Gate - Left Pillar Front Face:** There is a tree in the middle. To the left, a royal couple is seated on a couch, a male figure is raising a cup to his lips and the female is holding in her hand a round looking glass. To the right is a second couple engaged in social dailiance. In the middle below the tree, a couple of servants is standing on a stair-case. The male is, apparently, speaking and female is holding her right hand over her mouth. Probably, they are making some comment on the loving couples on each side.

**Western Gate Left Pillar - Inner Face:** There is an altar with trees surmounted by Chattras over which Kinnaras are hovering. To the left are two females, one carrying a chaurai and the other a water vessel. To the right is a dancing girl and two other females; both are playing some instrument. In the front of the altar, a
male figure is seated on the ground, lotus in hand, canopied by a five-headed nāga. To his left are three females each having a cup, and, to the right, are two females, each carrying a long drum. Each of these females is canopied by a nāga. It appears that they are celebrating some festival which is connected with a tree.

**Inner Face of the Northern Gateway Right Pillar:**
Here we see three trees with an altar to the left. Two females and a child are kneeling among the trees. To the front are seen two royal personages with hands joined in adoration and two females with offerings.

Again to the left are tree and an altar. Here the king and the queen are standing with folded hands in adoration before the tree. Two attendants are there with chātra and chaurī. To the right is an altar and Kinnaras hovering above with garlands. It appears that the Tree worship was a very common practice among the people of ancient India.

**North Gate - Left Pillar Front Face:**
Here we see wild rocks and water gushing forth into a pool which is overflowing. PL XXVIII. A female is seated on the rock with her legs in the water. To the left is seated a loving couple with their arms thrown around each other, the male with a cup in his hand. To the right, a royal
personage is playing the sarangi. In the foreground, two elephants are seen in the water. The king is seated on the left elephant, and is assisting a female to get up behind. On the right elephant, two females are seated behind the king.

This bas-relief appears to represent four different domestic scenes in the life of Sākya. In the first, he is seen seated in playful dalliance with his wife Yasodharā. In the second, he is playing the sarangi while she is bathing. In the third, he is assisting her to mount an elephant and in the fourth, they are seated together on the elephant.

South gateway:— Here we find the figure of Śrī Lakṣmī on the top architraves. She is standing in the midst of a lotus grove and attended by two elephants which form a very charming representation of the scene. The same Śrī Lakṣmī or Śrīma devata we find at Bharhut also. She is very common amongst the sculpturists of all ages. Perhaps because she is the goddess of luck and wealth. That is why very often we find her depiction. We again find her depiction in north gateway of the great stūpa at Sārnāth.

Besides this, we find a number of scenes where people are doing adoration in front of a tree with folded hands on western gateway and south gateway. It seems
tsiat tree worship was very common practice in the Śuṅga period.

The Andhra School produced some remarkable masterpieces at Amaravati where the life of the Buddha is dramatised in stone with marvellous craftsmanship. The best-named relief depicting the birth of Buddha is a master piece. In one of them, queen Māyā is lying in a graceful pose, dreaming of the six tusked white elephant which is about to enter her right side. She is in a graceful, relaxed sleeping posture. She is almost happily avid of the joy that is to come. Her right knee is bent and drawn up slightly toward the body which is the most comfortable posture for sleep.

In the next panel, she is standing holding a branch of the sal tree in the lumbini grove. She stands gracefully. The gods stand with a piece of cloth ready to receive the newborn infant while the women attendants wait upon the queen. The central figure, the child itself is invisible.

The statures of the figures indicate their rank and dignity. The human attendant is very much smaller than the four gods who are of a monumental stature while the queen herself, standing in the foreground, is of the size of the gods, even a little larger. Between
tie four and the queen is a kind of a foot-stool or a low pedestal.

And there is even a third moment, for since the queen is still holding the branch of the Śalī tree with her left hand. She is in the act of giving birth. In this relief the most striking feature is the posture of the queen. She stands in the so-called śāla-bhārika position, a classic attitude of the tree goddess in the Indian art. The figures of the Gods and the female attendent are watching the miracle with rapture.

The dynamism that welds bodies into organic units pulsating with their own life became one of the main themes and realization of the Buddhist art of Amravati in the first century A.D. New virtuality was attained there in the rendition of the human figure and, preferably the feminine figure — in all sorts of sensitive voluptuous, and ecstatic postures. For example, we can take one panel where, at the bottom, four women are shown steeped in beautific rapture, benothing and worshipping the Buddha whose presence is indicated by the impress of his feet. In the present little masterpiece, a lovely devotion shines forth from the astounding, though perfectly natural contortions of the women's bodies. It is almost as though the holy themes of the compositions had served the artists as mere pretexts for an exhibition
of their growing mastery. Indulging in bold variations on the secular theme of the dynamic aspect of feminine charm, they rendered the subject again and again in every possible modulation of kindered and contrasting poses.

The facile handwriting of the Indian sculptors and their easy manipulation of the chisel reached a climax of graceful fluency at Amaravati. One panel shows a Naga king and his two queens approaching from the right of the scene to pay homage to the Bodhisattava Gautama as he crosses the river Niranjana to the tree of enlightenment. Here also, the presence is represented by his footprint. The watery realm is indicated by aquatic birds sporting on the surface. The two shores are suggested by the trees. A group of wild geese or swans, in its migratory flight, becomes aware of the savior and in solemn clockwise flight, circumambulates in mid air.

In the Naga and his wives, the ability of the sculptor to render the human body is beautifully evident.

One of the most elaborate Saiva themes to be represented in the Indian art is that known technically as kalpavriksha mūrtī or the marriage between Śiva and Pārvatī. This theme also represents the method of the Hindu marriage which is one of the most important social functions.
At Mathura, we find two reliefs. Both are now preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. The right side of the panel is dominated by Śiva and Pārvatī while the left shows Viṣṇu in an equally prominent fashion. Śiva is shown in the atibhange posture. The stance of Pārvatī is a more gentle tribhanga. Śiva holds in his four arms, the trident trisūla in the upper right hand, the lower right hand holds a circular object against his chest. The upper left hand above Pārvatī's head holds a snake whereas the lower left rests lightly on her shoulder. He is adorned with jewellery. Pārvatī is standing on the left of her lord. She is appropriately bejewelled with an elaborate coiffure. Her left arm is broken and the object in the right is not clearly recognisable.

Immediately next to Pārvatī's left is the tiny seated figure of the four armed Brahmā offering oblations to Agni. The rest of the panel is filled with other devatas and attendants.

In the second relief from Mathura on a plain Triratna pedestal Śiva appears to be stepping forth followed by Pārvatī. All the four homes of the god are mutilated but probably the lower right hand might have held the hand of Pārvatī as they are circumambulating around the fire. Śiva is adorned with Yajnopavīta, a long garland - vanamālī - the necklace, the bracelet -
bhumijalaya - the waist band udarabandha and anklets — 

Parvatī is also adorned with heavy jewellery. Between their feet is the tiny figure of the four faced and four armed Brahma, who is doing the job of an official priest. He is in a kneeling posture and is seen feeding Agni with ghee.

The same theme we find at Kailash temple Ellora. Elephants and Kanauj with slight variations.

At Kailash temple also, Siva is standing on the left stretching out the right hand to receive the right hand of the bride, Parvatī. Parvatī stands on the right accepting with her right hand that of Siva in the act of Pāñjorahaṇa. Brahmā is doing the job of an official priest.

At Elephanta, Parvatī is seen on Siva’s right. She inclines her body slightly and originally had her right hand in Siva’s in the ceremony of Pāñjorahaṇa. Her crowned head is demurely inclined. Parvatī’s ornaments include a jewelled band about her brow, from which escape the curls of her hair, large pendant ear-rings and a number of necklaces. Siva stands in the tribhaṅga position holding the folds of his robe in his front left hand. The arms are broken. He wears the sacred cord across his chest and the jata Mukuta on his head behind which is an oval halo. He is adorned with snakes and jewels.
Behind Pārvatī the king of Himalaya is standing as usual Brahmā is doing the job of the official priest just at Śiva's left where he crouches over the sacrificial fire. A jubilant circle of flying divinities fills the background above.

One of the panels of the Mathura school represents Buddha's birth. Here, Māyā is standing under the ṣāl tree. The infant Buddha, marked by a circular halo, is standing between two nāgas, which issue half way from masonry wells and fold their hands in adoration. They are Nānda and Upanand who according to Lalitavistāra, issued from the earth and showered two streams of water over the new born Bodhisattva. Here, we may compare a fragment from Amravati on which, next to the birth scene, we find a bas-relief on which two females, one carrying a hand-kerchief with the sacred foot prints and the other holding an umbrella over it, approach a fountain enclosure from which issues a Nāga its hands joined in adoration. Another female figure is seen behind.

The second Bhutesar pillar in the Calcutta museum has three panels which refer to the Valapessa Jataka. This is the story of the five hundred merchants' ship wrecked on the island of the Shegololines who made them their husbands. In the upper panel, chief merchant is seen climbing up a tree and addressing the victims.
imprisoned in a tower by the ogresses. The central panel shows the wise merchant who made his escape with the aid of a flying horse, which in reality, was the future Buddha. The lower panel depicts the fate of the two hundred and fifty merchants who did not listen to the good council and foolishly stayed behind. The She Gobblins played with them for a while but, on the arrival of the fresh victims, they cast them into the house of torment and devoured them. Another Bhutesar pillar, which has lately been returned from Lucknow to the Mathura Museum, has three scenes. In the upper most panel, four women emerging half way from what may be rocks or the ocean. The central panel shows a man and a woman seated side by side on the top of a wall or a rock in front of which pair of deer are playing face to face. The male figure is playing the harp and his female companion seems to best tune. The third scene shows a man being carried up a rock by a woman. We are unable to identify these scenes, whether they depict social life of that time or part of any store, is not known.

Along with the sculptures of the Mathura school, we also find some sculptures which belong to the school of Gandhāra art. One relief from Nathu, now in the Calcutta museum, illustrates the presentation to the Buddha of a mango grove by the courtesan Āmarpālī. Here
the Buddha is portrayed as seated under a canopy of mango leaves and fruit. On his right is Amrapāli with her female companions and on his left are two of the Lichhavi nobles and beyond them the Vajrapāli and a deva. The Amrapāli is in the act of making a gift, is shown by the ceremonial water vessel in her hands. All the figures in this panel, except the Buddha, have the bulging eyes.

A panel from Takht-i-Bahi, now in the British museum, depicts the "Sleep of the women". In the centre, is the Yāsodharā asleep on a cushioned couch, her hand under her cheek and a garland still on her head. Beside her sitting on the side of the couch is her husband, the Budhisattva, haloed and in princely attires. At the side of the couch is the foreground, the women of the palace have fallen asleep over their drums. At the back on the right, are a female guard and an attendant, and on the left presumably, the groom, Chaṇḍaka, carrying his master's head-dress and leading the horse Kaṭhanaka by the bridle, but these two figures are too damaged.

In the excavations at Dharmarajika stūpa at Taxila, there are several fragments of much larger panels depicting the same scene of the "sleeping woman". One of these exhibits three sleeping figures, with traces of a fourth at the right hand top corner. One of the three is seated on a high backed wicker chair with legs
crossed and arms bent to support her dropping head. Another on the left rests her head against her hand, the third, in the background, holds a six stringed instrument.

Māyā's dream was found in the Kalawān monastery at Taxila. Occupying the centre of the picture is the queen's bed chamber flanked by vaulted corridors supported on persepolitan pillars. In the middle of the chamber Māyā is lying asleep on a draped couch, her head raised on a high pillow. Beside her, at the head of the couch, stands a female attendant, while, another, spear in hand, keeps guard at the foot and two more wait in the vaulted corridors. To the right, above the queen's head is a gallery from which two seated figures are looking down and the defaced stone to the left shows the outline of the haloed Bodhisattva descending in the form of an elephant. The left legs of the queen's couch are carved to represent the stylized front of normed animals. The persepolitan typed pillars were provided with shafts and it has the bell capital above.

Udaigiri and Khandagiri caves: Rājāti GumphaI: In the scene carved on the back wall of the verandah, a celestial figure is carrying a basket of lotus garlands. The second scene represents three elephants who seems to be attacking a panicky crowd. In the fore-front are
shown a female and a male figure defending themselves with a heavy club. Behind them are a number of female figures either seeking shelter in various attitudes of consternation or by their gesture offering to assist in repelling the attack. It is, probably, some social scene where a loving couple is defending themselves. They, probably, had violated some social norms.

Then we come to the third scene which is best preserved. It consists of eight figures, four female, and four males, in four groups. The first represents a man apparently asleep inside a doorway and a woman sitting and watching him. In front of these is a woman leading a man by the hand apparently to introduce him to the first pair. Beyond this on the right, a man and a woman are engaged in mortal combat holding swords and shields in their hands. Beyond these on the extreme right, a man carried in his arms a woman who still bears her shields in her hand though she has dropped the sword, and is pointing with the finger of her right hand towards the fighting first pair. This scene is repeated on the frieze of the Ganesha-Gajapati and is often described as the scene of a rape which existed in ancient social life. The fifth scene is carved in the central compartment shows a group of female figures apparently approaching to worship a saint seated cross-legged like
to-day, people particular women believed in worshipping saints etc.

The sixth scene represents a social get-together where the drink party is going on. It consists of three amorous couples seated on couches and enjoying drinks.

Again, there is a representation of a royal hunting scene, which points to the story of king Dushyanta visiting the sage, Kanva, and falling in love at first sight with Sakuntalā. The whole make-up of this story is very interesting. In the beginning, the king arrives with his soldiers, his own presence is indicated by a horse with an empty back followed by an attendant holding fly-whisk and an umbrella. In the next scene, the king is hunting and shoots his arrows at the frightened deer. In the third scene, the leader of the herd ushers the king into the presence of a beautiful woman. The king has withdrawn his bow and is in the act of looking at her or conversing with her. The female figure rests on the lower branch of a tree and the deer crouches at her foot. This version of the story is near to the legend of Dushyanta and Sakuntalā as given in the Mahābhārata.

Gangesa Gumpha:- The bas-relief contains sixteen persons. In the first part of the story, we see a party of soldiers on foot, dressed in kelts and moving in the
act of pursuing. In front of them are three persons on an elephant. The first male figure is showering coins from a purse. The second is also a male figure who is shooting with a bow and arrows in the direction of the pursuing soldiers. The third person is a woman driving the elephant with a goad help in her right hand. A tree separates this scene from the next one. In the second scene, the elephant is kneeling on the ground and the riders are getting down. In the third part of the scene, are seen the same three persons standing and moving. The last one has a big bundle or a container on his shoulders. In the fourth scene, the female figure is seated on a rich cushion in a disconsolate mood and her companion is trying to console her. It is possible to identify these scenes with an episode in the Vasavadatta story.

The clue to this identification is furnished by three terracotta plaque recently discovered from the ancient site of Kausambī, once the capital of king Vatsaraja Udayna. They are now deposited in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benaras. They illustrate the tense part of the Vasavadatta Udayana legend, the flight of the lovers from Ujjayani on the back of a female elephant in the company of their court jester Vasantaka. It seems that these stories of love affairs were very
common, at least in high society because in literature also, we find the story of Nala and Damyantī, Ānīnān Sakuntalam and Mālvikāgnimitra written by Kālidāsa.

At Karle and Kanheri we find beautiful sculptures of the donors. At Kalre, the richly sculptured pillars inside the cave No. XXXVII form a continuous garland. Fifteen on each side of the cave and seven round the apse, are excellent examples of the stylar architecture inside any citatya hall of its kind. Their bases consist of a full vase (Pūrṇa gnata) placed on a pedestal of diminishing tiers. The shaft is octagonal and the top is an inverted pot of the same design as the base except that it is covered with flowing lotus leaves. Surmounting the same is a capital with a fluted abacus supporting two kneeling elephants (Gajasāgnāla) with male and female riders or dāmpatī figures towards the nave and adorned horse figures towards the aisles. In some caves, the dāmpatī figures give place to two female figures only all of which are executed in a much better way. They are, probably, the figures of donors.

Kanheri:- The front verandah, termed as a garbhāvāra comprises two screens, the outer and the inner, conceived in two storeys, the lower and the upper. The outer screen has three openings among five pillars and in its middle front portion holes for the attachment
of a projecting Sangitāsāta made entirely of wood are noticed. The statues of two pairs of dāmpati are beautifully framed within a border of two lion-capitals on the two sides and rows of dentils above and below. The male figures wear conspicuous turbans, heavy ear-pendants, flat torques and necklaces, armlets, wristlets and dhoti with folds and a girdle. In their upraised right hand, they hold chauries. The two female figures on the proper right side of their husbands are also richly ornamented and draped. They also appear to be donors.

At Patna, we find a panel which represents two lovers under a tree. The sculpture is very beautiful. Here, the two figures emerge so bright and clean from the dark background. Both are standing close together. A trunk of tree separates them as well as itself from the tree. The sculpture is almost a panel from life of the Śūṅga kind Agni-mitra as described in Kālidāsa's famous drama Mālviṅka Gnmimir. Her embarrassed look, with a hesitant hand posed on the king's neck, accentuated the none too forward approach of the king holding a present with one hand and timidly twining the lady with the other and both fit in an episode of the play.

A very interesting find from Mahasthangarh is a terracotta plaque depicting the "Dream of Māya Devī".
It is very skilfully patterened against the square panel by placing the bed diagonally across the plaque. Thus, we have seen a new design different from the primitive illustration of the same theme at Bharhut and Sāñcā. Panarpur sculpture on the east wall may be seen, as one approaches the monument, a rectangular relief panel which shows Śiva standing in a group. Śiva is seen to proper left of the panel, with a staff having a broad knob at the top, in his right hand and a cup in his left hand. His identity is certain from Šrīya ādiśeśa, as he is always represented with at Panarpur. In front of the god stands a woman with her hands up and her waist clasped by a small figure. Three other figures, among whom, we may recognise that of the emancipated sage. Bhrngi, appear to the proper right of the panel. On two sides of Śiva appears two dwarf figures and on the background may be seen trees and foliage. The two female and Śiva wear ornaments and we find in each case a pair of ear-rings, one neck collar, a pair each of armlets and bracelets and a pair of anklets, the last only on the female figures. All the faces exhibit poor workmanship. The lips are not only thick but also badly drawn. The eyes, too, are somewhat cruelly executed. The left shoulder of Śiva is disproportionately large. But the legs and feet of
Siva and of the female by his side are rendered quite naturalistically while those of the second female exhibit an extraordinarily flowing linear rhythm which can hardly be expected except in the Gupta classical art. The designs and then drawing and carving are exquisite and compare favourably with the best specimens of the period. The very fine finish of the stone cutting is in strong contrast to the rough sculpturing, technique of the human figures. This panel is, probably, the representation of the episode of the offering of the poison, which came up as a result of the churning of the ocean, to Siva and his drinking it up. This episode accounts for the origin of his name as Nīlakaṇṭha.

In the Mahābhārata and Matsyapurāṇa also we come across this story. Both give similar stories that the poison known as Kālikūta came out from the mouth of Snāk King Vāsuki, who served as the churning rope. The poison came out as a terrible mass of blue colour on the ocean, strong like fire, roaring like clouds, throwing of awful breath and enveloping all the lokas by its cloud like a mass. Then, on the request of Ārāma and Viśnu, Siva sucked the poison down to his throat. Śiva Purāṇa also refers to the same story.

We find the representation of the Mahābhārata at Deogarh belonging to 6th century A.D. Here all the five
pandavas are represented with their common wife Draupadi. Firstly, we see Yudhisthir, to his right is Bhima and Arjuna is in the corner. At Yudhisthir's left, stand Nakula and Sahadeva. And finally, in the corner at the right is Draupadi. It is a wonderful example of polyandry in the Brāhmaṇa Tradition.

**Ajanta**— Ajanta is the richest centre of the ancient Indian art. A scene is painted on the wall of the front aisles, between two, window and a small door to the left of the main entrance. It represents a scene in the life of the Buddha when as a mendicant he goes to the door of his own palace. Here, he is standing with divine calm. His pose is very graceful, the head with curled black hair is slightly lifted and the beautifully moulded right hand raised. He is dressed in a pure white robe and holds in his left hand a staff and strings of beads adorn his neck and wrists.

Proceeding further from the door, we see a pillared corridor in which a male servant is announcing the arrival of the hermit. He is wearing a long coat with full sleeves. Further up in the corridor is a maid servant bringing to the hermit offerings on a tray.

After that, we see a pavilion on which a princess engaged in some conversation with a maid of honour. She is wearing thin raiments. Behind the princess,
there are two more attendants one of the pinkish complexion and the other of greyish. The princess is adorned with rich jewellery. The expression on the face of her shows much pathos.

Next subject is painted on the wall of the front aisle above the small door to the left of the main entrance. It is probably in continuation to a previous scene. First of all, we see a general in a state of great excitement, his right hand stretched out with the palm open as if he wants to say something. Two maids of honour are sitting in the corridor and looking at each other. Their faces have been partly destroye. To the right of the corridor, where the general is standing, is a pavilion, where four female attendants are visible. One of them is a chauri bearer, standing behind the pillar in attendance to the princess whose figure has been destroyed. At the extreme right corner of the pavilion is another chauri bearer whose bust is intact. She is dressed in a jacket with a floral design. Below her, there is another maid of a pale brown complexion who is looking at the princess. She has placed her forefinger under her chin. In this scene also, the general is probably making the announcement of Bhikṣū's arrival.

The story of the Sāṅkhāra Jātaka is represented on the back wall of the left aisle, above the first
cell-door. Here, king Magadha is wearing an ascetic's robe imparting instructions in the low of Sahkhapāla. The naga king is sitting on a low cushion. He is wearing an elaborate crown and rich jewellery. The expression on his face is one of great devotion. He is sitting with folded hands. Behind him is a princess of great elegance. She is listening with interest to the sermon of the ascetic. Behind her is a maid of red complexion. Below the princess is a dwarf who is bringing a tray of flowers to the ascetic as an offering. The most notable figure in this group is the woman who is sitting in front of the ascetic. Her pose exhibits great skill and observation. She is squatting, having crossed her legs, and leaning on the left hand which is placed on the earth while with the right hand she is supporting her head in a graceful manner.

The story of Mahājanka Jatak is painted on the back wall of the left aisle, between the doors of the third and fourth cells. Here the Rājā is engaged in a serious conversation with his consort. Starting from the left side of the fresco, we see a pavilion in which an elderly woman, probably the mother of the Rājā, is initiating the young Rājini into the secrets of the doctrine (renunciation). The former has clasped the folded hands of Rājini in order to console her. The
expression the queen mother betrays sadness. She is wearing a robe of white muslin, while the Rājā is clad in a bodice of transparent gauze, the fine texture of which has been delineated by white dots and lines. Behind the queen mother is a female chauri-bearer wearing a low-necked garment of striped silk. Below the queen mother is another figure of a maid servant, who is looking up in excitement.

In front of the pavilion of the queen mother is the apartment of the Rājā in which he is shown deeply occupied in a religious discourse with his wife. The face of the queen is spoiled but her pose is quite graceful and shows that she is listening with attention to the Rājā. The transparent cloth of her bodice can be discerned with greater certainty here, for the dots and lines showing the texture of the gauze are clear. Behind the Rājā a chauri-bearer of fair complexion is standing. The expression on her face is said. Behind the Rājā also is a chauri-bearer the colour of whose skin is silver grey. She is wearing a blue bodice. Her features are drawn very beautifully.

Behind the cushion of the Rājā, another female figure is to be seen. There are two more female attendants behind the Rājā who look quite puzzled. One of them is holding a bunch of lotus flowers in
her right hand. A dwarf is sitting below the rāja’s throne.

The story of Visvaṁśa Jataka is also represented. The king is offering a cup of wine to RAJİ. PL XXIX.

The story of the Compālva Jataka is painted on the back wall of the inner aisle, above the doors of the cells. The story is divided in four scenes. At the right hand of Compāla is his consort sitting on another cushion. The rāja has placed his right hand for support on the knee of his consort and, with the left hand, he is making a gesture indicating the wretchedness of his plight. The pose of the nāginī is artistic; she has placed her hand below her chin and is looking up, lovingly at the serpent king. On the left hand of the rāja is the comic figure of a dwarf who is presenting something to his lord on a tray. Behind the raja are two damaged figures of chaurī-bearer.

In the corridor to the left of the rāja’s pavilion are a mother and a child. The mother Sumaṁa is grieved at the idea of Compāla’s going away to the world of men to perform his fasting vows. She is leaning against a pillar and has placed her one hand on the head of the child and with other is expressing the difficulty of her position. The child is looking up
affectionately at the mother. Behind the child is an attendant of a reddish complexion.

In the second scene Rājā Uggasena of Benaras is watching the performance of the snake who was caught by the Brāhmaṇ Snake-charmer. The rest of the panel is filled with ministers and attendants. Below, near the right corner we see the snake charmer with a basket and a white serpent in front of him. Behind the Rājā, we notice a group of women among whom a mother and a child are prominent. According to the Jatakas story, Sumana, the consort of Campālya, appears at the snake dance, which is performed before Uggasena, but she holds herself in the air like a divine being. The head of the mother is damaged but the manner in which she is looking up and in which she holds the child clearly shows that she is appealing to the Rājā to release her serpent-husband. Two females, standing near the mother, indicate that they are deeply impressed by her pathetic appeal. One of these is dressed in a long robe.

In the third scene, Campālya and Uggasena are represented in the woods to be seen outside a white doorway of the Dravadian style. To the right of the doorway is the royal hall filled with ladies and attendants. In the middle, Campālya is initiating Uggasena into the mysteries of the faith in a teaching attitude. A figure
of young lady above the right shoulder of Campalya is very charming. Her pose is very graceful and with the right hand she is balancing a stick while the left is raised in a pretty manner towards her chin. Below her is another lady whose face is also very sweet. Behind Campalya, there is the comic figure of a dwarf. At his left hand and behind the Campalya is a female of reddish complexion holding a pearl necklace in her right hand and a tray with a cover in her left. A cobra hood above her head indicates that she is a nāgīṇī. To the left side of this female is a guard who is armed with a sword. Behind Uggasena, at the right handside of the fresco is a group of five woman, two of whom are seated and the rest standing. Behind the standing woman is a male servant.

Here again we find Bodhisattva in the form of a man. But, to show his close association with the Nāga world in his previous birth, the artist has painted several Nāga chiefs and queens paying homage to the Bodhisattva.

Outside the pavilion and towards the right, we notice a large palanquin which is being carried on the shoulders of four attendants. In the second scene, we see a jungle. At the left, we see two figures, one of which is a man of green complexion with very fierce
looks. The features of the other man are spoiled but his frizzled woolly hair is suggestive of his wild temper. He holds a blue poinard in his right hand and a cup in his left. Probably, they are appointed by the king to murder the woman inside the palanquin.

In the middle of the painting is a tree of colossal size below which the palanquin has been placed. Three women, may be seen one of whom is lying on her left side, apparently seized with acute pain, and another is doing some first aid service. The third woman is still inside the palanquin but her figure is visible through the opening.

In the third scene, we see a green complexioned ruffian and also a new born baby who has been set afloat in a cradle on the waters of the lotus pond, probably, by the ruffian. A woman, perhaps, the mother of the child is sitting in a pensive mood in front of the palanquin.

Below this scene, we see a nāga king and two nāginga, his consorts and two more female figures. He has rescued the babe. It is in a much damaged condition.

On the right wall of the chapel, we again see a rāja who is sitting on a throne. On the left of the rāja is the figure of a youth behind whom two elephants may be seen with two women sitting on them. It is,
probably, representing the honourable return of the woman to her father's palace along with his deshi and son.

This story shows that the lady or the daughter of the king was punished by her father because she might have done something which was not accepted by the society. Probably, her crime was connected with the new born baby.

Here we notice king Dnirtarāṣṭra and his consort queen Khema. PI XXX. Behind the throne of the Bodhisattva is a chauri-bearer and towards the right, near the foot of the throne, are two ladies of noble class, one of whom is apparently queen Khemā. She is looking up towards the Bodhisattva. She has placed her forefinger on her chin. In her left hand she holds a sword. The miracle of the Golden Goose assumes the human form while teaching the law to the Rāja of Benaras and queen Khemā. In the next scene we see a lotus lake. In the upper part of the fresco are hills represented by conventional bands. Queen Khemā is seen watching the graceful movements of the golden goose in the lotus pool. By her side, towards the right, her sword is fixed in the ground. The figure of queen Khemā is quite damaged, but the portion which remains shows a charming study of the female beauty of India.

The story of Vidhura paññita is painted on the wall of the right corridor, above and between the first
and the second cell doors. Here we see Pūrṇika as
showing the magnificent jewel to king Dvāraka-jaya in
order to induce him to play a game of dice. The king
is sitting on a throne. To the right of the king is a
female figure holding some round mirror-like object.
She, probably, is his queen. In the second episodes,
we find women in the court in a sad mood.

The third episode depicts that Vidhura was carried
by Yakṣa Pūrṇika and in the fourth Vidhuraparītā is
teaching the sacred doctrine to the Nāga king Varuṇa
and his queen and daughter who are sitting beside —
the Nāga king but they have no hood to signify their
Nāga origin. They have folded their arms and joined
their hands. In this pose, the charm of the soft tapering
fingers with beautiful nails, the lovely contours of
the bust, and the exquisite curve of their waist have
been shown. The brown complexion of the two ladies has
a good contrast against the dark green background. The
ear-ornaments of these women are also worthy of notice.
They have an elaborate pendant, like the modern Jhumkā.
The sets of bangles appear to be of ivory or Conch-shell.

In the fourth episode, we again find Vimala and
Irandaṭī having Nāga hoods above their heads. In the
fifth episode, a princess is painted twice, first in a
swing and after wards against the post of the swing.
and talking to a young man with a horse. The princess is no one else but Irandatī. The expression of Irandatī's face in talking to an unknown young man shows great restraint, but her inner joy is visible from the glow on her countenance given by high lights. The face of the young man, who, according the Jataka, is Pūrṇika is also beaming with a similar light.

The story of continues on the right side of the fresco where we see palace scene in which the Nāga king is talking his daughter and wife about the proposal of Pūrṇika. Among the women, the princess Irandatī is addressing the Nāga king and the delineation of her face and the gesture of her fingers, half looped, show that she is not very doubtful regarding the mission of Pūrṇika - in bringing the heart of Vidhurapāṇḍita.

The Birth of the Buddha: The subject is painted in several scenes on the hall of the left corridor, above and along the sides of the first and the second cell doors.

Starting from the left side of the first cell door, we notice Māyā lying on her left side on a couch. The upper part of her body is much damaged though the lower one is comparatively better preserved and shows her wearing a long skirt of striped material. Below the couch, in front, are four female attendants. On the
other side of the couch near the feet of Māyā is another attendant holding a triangular object. It may be a harp. Just above the right side of Māyā is a circular white object which may represent the elephant of the story.

The story seems to have been continued in the upper part of the fresco where we see another chamber in which a ḫaṭā is talking to her consort. She is probably relating the dream to king Suddhodana. The ḫaṭā is seated upon a cushion and behind him is a fair complexioned chaurī-bearer. Then we see the ḫaṭā and the ḫaṭā Māyā and Suddhodana sitting on a throne. Her head is slightly inclined. The expression of their faces shows that they are listening with attention to the interpretation of the dream by the chief Brahman who is sitting on a low square stool in front of them. Behind the ḫaṭā is a female chaurī-bearer and another female attendant is sitting below her throne and looking towards the Brāhmaṇ. Between the ḫaṭā and the Brāhmaṇ, there are two figures. The latter, of fair complexion, is holding something to be offered to the king and the queen and the style of his cap indicates that he is a foreigner. The other figure is of a dark complexion and carrying presents in both hands. The general effect of the whole figure is that it is a superb piece of Indian art showing fine conception, perfect technique and highly developed decorative sense.
The next scene of this subject represents the birth of the Buddha in a Lumbani grove. Mahā Māyā is seen standing in the middle holding the branch of the sal tree. In front of her are Brahmā, Indra, a chaurlī-bearer and a hermit representing the four Mahā Brāhmaṇas, who received the Buddha on a golden net at his birth. In the fresco the child is held on a mattress by Indra and Brahmā is holding an umbrella. The fly whisk and the pearl string are held by the other two. Behind Māyā are two female attendants, one is holding a chaurlī. Near the feet of Māyā is a dwarf presenting offerings on a tray. Below, in the foreground, is a line of the lotus flower, which grew up step by step along with the seven steps the Divine child took immediately after his birth. Further to the right, Indra is seen holding the umbrella over the babe who is standing on a lotus.

In the left part of the fresco and near the deity three figures two of them females are holding pearl string. They are Māyā and Her maid servant and a personal male servant.

At Ellora, we find very homely scenes in which Śiva is conversing with Pārvatī and also the love scene in which Śiva is sitting in self confident mastery. His head is held high in the victory of passion, while Pārvatī clings to him in wild abandonment. We can see
husbands and give their opinions on family matters. This shows that women used to take part in conversations with their husbands and give their opinions on family matters.

In one more panel, Śiva and Pārvatī are posed in a happy domestic life. They are playing the game of chess-causaatt. Pārvatī, in a dignified pose with one of her legs hanging down is partaking in her turn in the game while Śiva is watching the move of the piece on the board placed between them. This panel also represents that the game of chess was very popular in the ancient times and for passing time people used to play it.

At Elephanta also, we find four-armed Śiva learning towards Pārvatī on his left while she turns slightly away from him. This scene has been interpreted as depicting a quarrel between Pārvatī and Śiva over the presence of Gangā in the God’s hair. Whether or not is it correct, it is a good representation of the Hindu home life. The rest of the panel is filled with Brāhmī, female attendant and other flying devatas.

A niche at the Kailasanatha temple at Ellora depicts the rape scene of Sītā, the wife of Rāma, by the Demon Rāvana. Rāvana lifted her into his magical aerial car, which is in swift flight across the sky after having surprised her in her forest hermitage in the Vindhyā mountains where she had been left, for a
moment without the protection of her husband.

The figure of Sītā, crouching in the flying chariot, has been mutilated but the form of Rāvaṇa is intact and it is one of the finest realizations of the Hindu classic sculpture in boldness and elegance of dramatic posture. The powerful demon king emerges from the frame of the niche as a figure fully carved in the round. We see Jāṇaśyū futilely assailing the demon king who is taking Sītā away.

Thus, we see that the ancient monuments throw light on the social and religious life of the people of that period.